

Safetyline 101

H & S UPDATE MAY 2009

If you've been keeping up with the news, you will be aware that **Swine flu** has recently been detected in several countries including the UK. The flu is believed to have originated in Mexico, which is where the majority of cases have been discovered and over 100 people have so far died. At this time the confirmed cases of Swine Flu outside Mexico have shown only mild symptoms but currently insufficient information is known to be able to understand why the flu appears to be much more virulent in Mexico. The Health Protection Agency in the UK is monitoring the situation daily and their website carries all up to date information; this can be found at <http://www.hpa.org.uk/>. At this time there are no travel restrictions but Government advice is that travel to Mexico should be cancelled unless the trip is urgent.

In response to the Panorama programme on BBC1 on Monday 20th April ("**May Contain Nuts**") the Times has written a far more balanced article on the same issues arising from the programme. See http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/life_and_style/article6135369.ece.

Several months ago an email was circulated stating that we are still encountering **problems with fire alarm signals being received in the Control Room**. This has yet to be fully rectified and this note is to remind you all that it is essential that at least one person within each department or building should be tasked with contacting the Control Room on 4444 to inform them when a fire alarm sounds in your building. For those of you who test the fire alarm in your building, when contacting the Control Room prior to and after the test, ask them whether the signal was received by them. If not report the lack of signal to Estates Helpdesk on Ext 29000, although at this time no solution has yet been determined to rectify the fault. However, if you find that the signal is not received in Control please ensure that you have arrangements in place to ring Control in the event of a fire alarm on Ext 4444.

The *Factories Act 1961 and Offices, Shops and Railway Premises Act 1963 (Repeals and Modifications) Regulations 2009* came into force on 6th April 2009 to **remove the requirement for notification to HSE** of occupation of a factory and employment of persons working in offices, shops and railway premises under the 1961 and 1963 Acts. It also removes the requirement to keep a general register under the 1961 Act. HSE now obtains information on factory premises using a range of more reliable and efficient information sources and strategies, as do many local authorities on offices and shops; and the general register is obsolete as modern legislation has overtaken the original purpose of this requirement.

The *Health and Safety (Miscellaneous Amendments and Revocations) Regulations 2009* came into force 6th April 2009 correcting issues that have arisen since 2005 regulations on the **manufacture and storage of explosives** came into force. They also take the opportunity to reduce the administrative burden resulting from explosives legislation by extending the maximum periods of validity of explosives certificates and storage licenses. They also amend the address for the **GM register** under the *Genetically Modified Organisms (Contained Use) Regulations 2000* and correct an omission in the *Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005*. See http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2009/uksi_20090693_en_1

HSE have produced an information sheet on the manufacture and manipulation of carbon **nanotubes** (CNTs). Current research does not prove that CNTs will cause the same diseases as asbestos but does raise the level of concern. See <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/web38.pdf>

If you're in the process of relocating, check the **Building Relocation Checklist** for things you need to think about. See <http://safety.dept.shef.ac.uk/guidance/Building%20Relocation%20Checklist.pdf>

The **Gas Safe Register** replaced CORGI on 1st April as the statutory registration scheme for gas engineers.